

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 CU-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 AF-06

ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5075

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

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NESCO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PORG, PN, US

SUBJECT: PANAMA ISSUE IN UNESCO

SUMMARY: PANAMA HAS ANNOUNCED IT WILL RAISE CANAL ZONE ISSUE IN UNESCO, IN CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EFFECTS OF OPERATION OF DUAL SCHOOL SYSTEM WITHIN COUNTRY. ISSUE IS TO BE RAISED NARROWLY TO CONFORM WITH COMPETENCE OF ORGANIZATION, AND PANAMA STATES IT IS NOT BEING SWEEPED ALONG WITH POLITICIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENERAL. EMBASSY BELIEVES PANAMA IS USING DUAL EDUCATIONS ISSUE PLOY TO PLACE CANAL ISSUE BEFORE UNESCO AND THIS DOES NOT SIGNAL INTENTION TO RESTRICT AVAILABILITY OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SCHOOLING FOR DEPENDENTS OF US CITIZEN EMPLOYEES OF CANAL ENTITY UNDER A NEW TREATY. END SUMMARY

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1. ALL LOCAL PAPERS IN PANAMA FOR SEPTEMBER 5 AND 6

CARRIED IDENTICAL ANNOUNCEMENT THAT PANAMA WILL RAISE "THE PROBLEM OF THE CANAL ZONE" IN UNESCO. ANNOUNCEMENT IS BASED ON STATEMENT ISSUED BY PANAMANIAN AMBASSADOR TO UNESCO HORACIO BUSTAMANTE PRIOR TO HIS RETURN TO PARIS ON SEPTEMBER 6, AND WAS AMPLIFIED BY MORE EXTENSIVE INTERVIEW GIVEN TO INDEPENDENT LA ESTRELLA PUBLISHED ON SEPTEMBER 8 (COPIES POUCHED US REP UNESCO PARIS FOR INFO).

2. BUSTAMANTE STATES IN PART THAT ATTITUDE PANAMA HAS DECIDED TO ADOPT "DOES NOT SIGNIFY THAT IT IS BEING SWEEPED ALONG (ARRASTRADA) BY THE TIDE OF POLITICIZATION WHICH HAS INVADDED SOME INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS." ISSUE WILL BE RAISED IN STRICT RELATION TO OBJECTIVES OF ORGANIZATION, I.E. DAMAGE TO EDUCATION AND CULTURE AS CONSEQUENCE OF PRESENCE OF TWO DISTINCT SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN PANAMA, IN EFFORT TO ENLIST UNESCO IN SEARCH FOR SOLUTION TO PROBLEM.

3. IN ESTRELLA INTERVIEW BUSTAMANTE EXPANDED ON STATEMENT WITH LONG AND LAUDATORY RENDITION OF ASSISTANCE RENDERED BY UNESCO IN CONNECTION WITH VARIOUS PROJECTS IN PANAMA. HE SPOKE OF SEEKING SUPPORT FROM EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS AND ENTITIES WORLDWIDE: "PANAMA WILL EXPOUND BEFORE UNESCO THE REASONS WHICH MAKE UNACCEPTABLE THE DUALITY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE WITHIN ITS TERRITORY. ...THE PROBLEM IS NOT POLITICAL...PANAMA DESIRES TO REPROACH NO ONE...PANAMA WILL REQUEST THE HELP OF THIS ORGAN IN ORDER TO REQUEST THE ASSISTANCE OF ALL COUNTRIES, THROUGH THEIR DELEGATIONS TO UNESCO, TO CAUSE THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THIS DUALITY OF EDUCATION." ARTICLE STATES BUSTAMANTE MADE SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO ENGLISH-LANGUAGE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN CANAL ZONE, AND SAID HE WAS FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS OF GOP IN INTIMATE CONTACT WITH NEGOTIATING COMMISSION FOR NEW TREATY.

4. BUSTAMANTE ALSO STATED IN INTERVIEW THAT HE WAS TAKING TO PARIS AN INVITATION TO UNESCO DG TO VISIT PANAMA AT BEGINNING OF NEXT YEAR, TO CONSIDER SITUATION OF EDUCATIONAL PROBLEM AND AS GESTURE OF APPRECIATION FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNESCO ASSISTANCE TO PANAMA.

5. COMMENT: PANAMANIAN, WHILE RECOGNIZING LEGITIMATE NEED OF US CITIZEN CANAL EMPLOYEES FOR A SCHOOL SYSTEM ESSENTIALLY PATTERNED ON THE US MODEL, HAVE LONG ARGUED THAT CURRICULUM SHOULD ALSO INCLUDE SUBJECTS WHICH WOULD INSTILL IN US RESIDENTS OF CANAL ZONE SOME UNDERSTANDING OF PANAMANIAN CULTURE AND HISTORY. THEY ALLEGE THAT US

TEACHERS AND TOTAL ENVIRONMENT IN CANAL ZONE IN PAST HAS
TENDED TO INSTILL NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD PANAMA AND
PANAMANIAN. THUS EDUCATION ISSUE BECAME SORE POINT WITH
PANAMANIAN TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT IN 1971-72 ROUND OF
NEGOTIATIONS, PANAMA PRESSED FOR OPERATION OF US SCHOOL
SYSTEM UNDER OVERALL UMBRELLA OF GOP EDUCATION MINISTRY
STANDARDS. PANAMANIAN REMAIN SENSITIVE ON THIS
MATTER, BUT EMBASSY BELIEVES CURRENT GOP ATTEMPT
TO OBTAIN UNESCO DISCUSSION OF ISSUE IS PART OF ITS
OVERALL POLITICAL CAMPAIGN TO HAVE CANAL ISSUE AIRED IN
INTERNATIONAL FORUMS AND THEREBY GAIN MORE INTERNATIONAL
SUPPORT FOR PANAMA'S POSITION ON CANAL ISSUE. EMBASSY
WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING U.S. REP UNESCO PARIS REPORTS
ON ANY DISCUSSION OF SUBJECT, INCLUDING FULL TEXTS OF
ANY PANAMANIAN STATEMENTS IF AVAILABLE. WE ARE ASSUMING
THAT ISSUE WILL PROBABLY BE SURFACED AT UNESCO EXBD
MEETING COMMENCING SEPTEMBER 15. END COMMENT.
JORDEN

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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